

TARANDUS



A NEW PLAYABLE RACE FOR YOUR FANTASY TABLETOP ROLE-PLAYING GAMES
INCLUDES RULES FOR 5E AND PATHFINDER



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TARANDUS

For millennia, the tarandus have been recognised as a society of scholars, who consider it their duty to witness and record the history of their world. Tarandus are often highly educated in multiple subjects and languages; however, their culture also appreciates that there are many ways an individual can contribute to the preservation of knowledge beyond simply sitting in a library or classroom.

Outward Presentation

Tarandus are stately beings, standing between 6 and 7 feet tall and weighing around 225 pounds. All tarandus have antlers, which extend 12 inches above their heads. Tarandus are long-limbed, with humanoid arms, dexterous five-fingered hands and muscular legs ending in fur-covered hooves. Each being also has a dark-red nose, which can shine a red light to illuminate dark areas. This ability is most often used for reading in dimly lit rooms or sending signals.

There is a wide variety of fur colour within the tarandus community, ranging from deep brown to bright white. Fur can also change colour due to climate, age, or even diet. Tarandus typically don simple clothing, although more elaborate robes, armour and weapons can be loaned from their herd's historic collections.

Students of the Past

Tarandus are known for their dedication to the study of historical events. Huge libraries and universities containing well-archived academic documents dominate their settlements. The most scholarly tarandus spend their lives surrounded by books and parchment. However, some tarandus take a more practical path, such as guarding the precious contents of their campuses against theft, or venturing out into the world to record history as it happens. Tarandus are generally taught to be impartial observers, who avoid interfering in potentially historical events unless it is required in self-defence.

There is not one singular tarandus religion, however some spiritual individuals feel an affinity to a particular deity, often one associated with academia. Regardless of their personal faith, evidence of the divine is recorded by the tarandus with respect and unbiased accuracy.



'As I stepped my first hoof into the Great Library of Forestandria, I knew the treacherous journey from home had been worth it. In some ways, it wasn't so different from my own herd's libraries. There was a similar hushed mumble of cerebral conversation and a soft red glow of noses lit the desks. However, I soon identified subtle differences in the scent of the books, like a wine connoisseur sampling a particularly fine vintage. Archlibrarian Cersipheus proved a thorough guide, but I admit I was impatient to explore the shelves by myself.'

— Account of an exchange visit, from the diary of Fianna Elaffi Winterborn III of the Emerald Vale

Herd Creatures

Tarandus tend to live in large, established herd communities. Tasks such as caring for infants and gathering of food are shared amongst all herd members. Herds exist in various environments, from arctic tundras to more temperate forests, each with their own rich and well-documented history. Academic and cultural exchange is common between herds. However, most tarandus will eventually return to their home herd to share what they have learned.

A lone tarandus is a rare sight, as they value the safety and security of communal life. If a tarandus does need to embark on a solo expedition, they will often seek out a surrogate herd with which to travel. Their strong protective instincts can be provoked if their companions are in danger.

Naming Conventions

Unsurprisingly, historical names are popular with tarandus parents, often chosen to honour an ancient individual. It is not uncommon for a tarandus to have three or four given names. Their libraries house detailed family trees, meaning every tarandus is brought up with a strong understanding of their ancestry. Names therefore also tend to reference an individual's family, herd, or both.

As their full names can be long and somewhat unwieldy, most tarandus are happy for friends to use a shortened form of their name in casual conversation. For example, Rudolphus Alarik Sybillo the Fourth, Born of Krisanta of the Western Wood Wanderers, may also be known as Rudolph. It is normally considered polite to wait to be invited to adopt this informality, however.

Tarandus Given Names: Aphundantus, Adrasteia, Bjenedolch, Cornassium, Edbyn, Eibhlhinne, Fides, Highernmach, Melbonagain, Osmind, Phydwenllis, Quennell, Rudolphus, Tercyvelle, Withberth, Yphos.

Herd Names: Bibliobranchers, Children of the Birch, Everglade Herd, Firstfauns, Great Oak Librarians, Thicket Dwellers, Western Wood Wanderers.

5E TRAITS AND RULES

Your tarandus character has a strong academic grounding. They are able to use their powerful antlers and hooves to defend themselves when necessary.

Ability Score Increase

Your Intelligence score increases by 2 and your Strength score increases by 1.

Age

Tarandus are considered mature around the age of 21, and can live to be 85 years of age.

Alignment

Tarandus live by the rules and customs implemented by their herd, and are obligated to archive historical events. They tend towards being lawful in their alignment, and avoid picking sides in conflicts that don't involve them unless significantly provoked.

Size

An adult tarandus' body is generally muscular and between 5 and 6 feet tall. All tarandus have antlers, regardless of gender, bringing their total height to between 6 and 7 feet tall. On average, a tarandus weighs 225 pounds. Your size is Medium.

Speed

Your base walking speed is 35 feet.

Guiding Light:

As a bonus action, you can trigger bioluminescent blood vessels located

in your nose to produce dim light in a 20-foot radius for 1 minute. You can end this effect early as a bonus action.

Hooves:

Your hooves are natural melee weapons, which you can use to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with them, you deal bludgeoning damage equal to 1d4 + your Strength modifier, instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike.

Antler Defence:

Once per short rest as a bonus action, you may lower your antlers and enter a defensive stance. Until the start of your next turn, you have a +2 bonus to your AC against melee attacks, as your antlers take the force of the blows.

Student of History:

You gain proficiency with one of the following skills of your choice: History or Investigation.

Master of Cadence:

If you can see a creature's mouth while it is speaking a language you understand, you can interpret what it's saying by reading its lips.

Languages:

You can speak, read and write Common and two other languages of your choice.



Tarandus generally favour weapons that match their height and stature like spears, lances and halberds.

PATHFINDER ANCESTRY

If you want to play a knowledgeable character who is wise and perceptive, you should play a tarandus.

Hit Points: 10

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 feet

Ability Boosts: Strength
Intelligence
Free

Ability Flaw: Dexterity

Languages: Common, Terran.
Additional languages equal to your Intelligence modifier (if it's positive). Choose from Aquan, Auran, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Halfling, Ignan, Undercommon and any other languages to which you have access (such as the languages prevalent in your region).

Traits: Tarandus, Humanoid.

Shining Nose: You can make your red nose light up and emit normal light in a 10-foot radius and increase the light level by one step for an additional 10 feet beyond that area (darkness becomes dim light and dim light becomes normal light). This ability does not increase the light level in normal light or bright light.

Tarandus Heritages

SCHOLAR TARANDUS

You know where every book and record is stored in your herd's library, and can recite most of their reference numbers from memory. Needless to say, you have absorbed a mass of information

from your time spent thumbing through sacred archives and have learnt much about the world. You gain a +2 racial bonus when you Recall Knowledge or Gather Information.

SENTINEL TARANDUS

You are your herd's eyes and ears and spend many long days and nights alone, keeping watch for any suspicious individuals or predators that might seek to steal from or harm your people. Your eyes are finely tuned, and you can see in darkness and dim light just as well as you can see in bright light, though your vision in darkness is in black and white.

CHRONICLER TARANDUS

You decided to venture away from your herd and document important history whenever and wherever it happens in the world. Because of this, you spend much of your life travelling across regions, countries and continents. You gain a +2 racial bonus when you Hide, Sense Direction or Track.

Ancestry Feats

1ST LEVEL

PRUDENT DIPLOMAT

Your broad knowledge of other civilisations, developed either through academia or lived experience, helps you understand their behaviours on a much deeper level. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Diplomacy checks against other intelligent creatures. You also gain a +1 circumstance bonus on Perception checks to Sense the Motives of such creatures.

TARANDUS WEAPON FAMILIARITY

Tarandus have always favoured weaponry that matches their height and stature, with most of their traditional fighting styles focused on keeping enemies at arm's reach. You are trained with crossbows, lances, halberds and spears.

PERCEPTIVE ANALYST

You have documented much about the material world in your time, so, when something feels out of place or doesn't seem to fit with the rest of its surroundings, it

generally doesn't take you very long to identify the lapse in reality. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to both Perception checks and Will saves against illusions.

When you come within 10 feet of an illusion that can be disbelieved, the GM rolls a secret check for you to disbelieve it, even if you didn't spend an action to interact with the illusion.

TARANDUS LORE

You were taught about the ancestors in your family tree, and had access to their notes, memoirs and private musings about the world and how it works. This priceless information is wildly different for each herd. You gain the trained proficiency rank in Lore and Society. If you would automatically become trained in one of those skills (from your background or class, for example), you instead become trained in a skill of your choice. You also become trained in Tarandus Lore.

AGILE SPRINTER

You are one of the fastest sprinters in your herd, and have a knack for avoiding danger. Your Speed increases by 5 feet.

READER OF RUNES

Your comprehension of language reaches further than just the spoken word; you have gained a reasonable understanding of the glyphs and runes used in a particular spell. Choose one cantrip from the arcane spell list. You can cast this cantrip as an arcane innate spell at will. A cantrip is heightened to a spell level equal to half your level rounded up.

LIVING LIBRARY

Prerequisites: expert in Lore.

You never get information about your areas of expertise wrong. When you Recall Knowledge using any Lore subcategory in which you're trained, if you roll a critical failure, you get a failure instead. If you're a master in a Lore subcategory, on a critical success, you gain even more information or context than usual.

5TH LEVEL

KEEPER OF RUNES

Prerequisites: Reader of Runes.

With practise and further research, you now understand the glyphs and runes used in spellcasting. You gain *acid arrow* and see *invisibility* as 2nd-level arcane innate spells. You can cast each of these arcane innate spells once per day.

TARANDUS WEAPON ADEPT

Prerequisites: Tarandus Weapon Familiarity.

You have learnt to trust long weapons and have come to know their weight and balance intimately. Whenever you critically succeed at an attack roll using a crossbow, lance, halberd or spear, you apply the weapon's critical specialization effect.

9TH LEVEL

COLLECTOR AND CURATOR

Prerequisites: Charisma 16.

You are very fond of magic items and carefully curate lists of the ones that will be most useful to you. Increase your limit on invested items from 10 to 12.

13TH LEVEL

SKILFUL LINGUIST

Prerequisites: legendary in Society.

Your aptitude for linguistics, hieroglyphics and codes is so pronounced that you can decipher information with little more than a quick read through a text. You can Decipher Writing using Society while reading at normal speed. If you slow down and spend the full amount of time that's ordinarily required and roll a success, you get a critical success; if you critically succeed while spending the normal amount of time, you gain a nearly word-for-word understanding of the document.

GAZELLE'S LEAP

Prerequisites: Agile Sprinter, legendary in Athletics.

You are by far the most toned, lithe and lean tarandus in your herd. Your unparalleled athletic skill and muscular hind legs allow you to jump long distances. Triple the distance you Long Jump; when you High Jump, use the calculation for a Long Jump without tripling the distance.

When you Long Jump or High Jump, you can also increase the number of actions you use (up to the number of actions you have remaining in your turn) to jump even further. For each extra action, add your Speed to the maximum distance you jump.



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